



LARSON JUHL[®]
Rethinking Your
Merchandising Strategy



BRENTANO'S - NEW YORK CITY

ABSTRACT

Adapting, Inspiring, & Innovating

Customers crave in-store experiences that are customized to their particular needs. Whether it is allowing them to set an appointment or create a design virtually, there are many new ways to support the way customers like to shop. Create in-store experiences to showcase design styles and easy to understand pricing options. Give new customers ability to explore, whether it is on your social page or in-store through self-guided merchandising spaces. It's important for consumers to be able to browse and discover design options, along with dwell spaces if possible that give consumers a place to relax and read a magazine if there is someone already at the design counter.

What ways can you rethink
your merchandising strategies to appeal to *today's* consumers?



THE ROW - MANHATTAN

Experiential Design

During a time of global unrest and anxiety, retailers are seeking to engage their customers in a deeper, more emotional way by creating mindful and explorative shopping experiences in a harmonious physical space. Now that in-store shopping has become less frequent and more of an event, creating a safe, sanctuary-like space will ease consumers' fears.

- Design for safety and wellness to ensure that not only that your customers feel safe inside your store, they also alleviate stress during their shopping experience.
- Rebuild the feel-good factor that drives retail sales by integrating sanitation stations, contactless payment options, improved navigation and flow of the retail space, and using reassuring messaging.
- Create a sanctuary-space that is calm, uncluttered, and organized to allow customers to take a “micro-break” from growing demands at work and in the home.
- Build a digital sanctuary using virtual showroom strategies that display your product offerings clearly and aesthetically.
- Unite and strengthen your community by promoting local businesses and artists to attract a wider audience, revitalize sales, boost footfall, and create a community feel.

1. Saunter, Laura. "Designing for Distance: Post Coronavirus Strategies." WGSN, Trend Forecasting, 13 May 2020, www.wgsn.com/en/products/insight/?_fsi=2aZ3uW7n.

2. Orndorff, Brandon. "Sensory Experiences Drive 9 out of 10 Shoppers Back to Stores, Says Global Mood Media Study." Mood Media, 13 Feb. 2019, us.moodmedia.com/company/news/sensory-experiences-drive-9-out-of-10-shoppers-back-to-stores-says-global-mood-media-study/.



Discovery-Led Merchandising & Curated Assortments

How does one visualize experiential design and what are the key elements and best practices to follow?

This concept of discovery-led merchandising means rethinking space with more mindful and intuitive design features that create new systems and foster exploration over obvious organization.

- Create a space that allows the consumer to interact and engage with the products.
- Think counter-height design tables (with space around) to promote collaboration between you and your customer.
- Imagine samples on display where both parties can engage and connect with the product. Nowadays consumers appreciate curated selections, smaller formats, and minimally-designed spaces where decision-making is made easy.
 - Shopping thoughtfully and mindfully is always a winning strategy for retailers.
- Create a more curated assortment based on hero products and bestsellers with a few additional products to help round-out the design process (i.e. finding the sweet spot among profiles, finishes, and price-points). Keep additional products tucked away in drawers, which ensures the space remains calm, uncluttered and organized.

1. WGSN Insider. "Designing for Millennials." WGSN, Trend Forecasting, 29 August 2019, www.wgsn.com/en/products/insight/?_fsi=2aZ3uW7n.

2. Matt Poille, Jemma Shin. "Sanctuary Spaces Sotre Design Strategy" WGSN, Trend Forecasting, 14, December 2020, www.wgsn.com/en/products/insight/?_fsi=2aZ3uW7n.

Mindful Spaces with Home-Inspired Details

*Introduce mindful design by bringing home comforts into the store:
Curate and style the store by taking inspiration from the layout and furnishings of the home.
Design relaxing restorative spaces that are sensorial, honest, comforting and luxurious.*

- Thoughtfully-chosen furnishings are key. Think plush, cozy seating areas for waiting customers, stools at tables for comfort while designing, and natural woods and plants to bring in elements to bring the outdoors indoors.
- Merchandise the store with representations of product that will allow the customer to clearly visualize how their piece will be completed.
- Create frame models that are relevant to today's trends in interiors and artwork.
- Implement lifestyle merchandising by creating vignettes with the frames and add them in areas with other home decor & furnishings.
- These items used for lifestyle merchandising can become add-ons to boost sales, while also creating the feeling of an inspired home, driving sales for your hero items - custom framing.
- These lifestyle vignettes also create "shareable" moments which you and your customers can share via social media.

1. WGSN Insider. "Designing for Millennials." WGSN, Trend Forecasting, 29 August 2019, www.wgsn.com/en/products/insight/?_fsi=2aZ3uW7n.
2. Matt Poille, Jemma Shin. "Sanctuary Spaces Sotre Design Strategy" WGSN, Trend Forecasting, 14 December 2020, www.wgsn.com/en/products/insight/?_fsi=2aZ3uW7n.



Consumer Drivers

It's imperative to understand the challenges and opportunities that are shaping the daily lives of consumers to know how your company can create products and services that will fulfill these diverse needs.



2022 Consumer Drivers

Financial Anxiety

1

Quest for Truth

2

Loneliness Syndrome

3

Health & Safety Concerns

4

Consumer Drivers

Taking a considered approach to shifts in consumer drivers will inform how business leaders innovate to remain relevant in an increasingly challenging environment.

- Ease customers **financial anxiety** by creating value in your product offerings. Diversify the product range to offer more accessible price points and make re-framing, repairing, and promoting up-cycling part of your longterm business model.
- Deliver a **safe environment** to address customers' health concerns. Consider diversifying your assortment to include self care and wellness products.
- **Promote togetherness** by fostering community spirit, (both Online and in person), to forge a closer bond with your customers.
- Create **virtual connections** through Online classes, demonstrations, and tutorials
- Build and maintain trust with consumers through **price transparency**, ethical labor, and sustainable practices - the top of consumers' priorities.
- **Offer comfort** and reassurance through using smart packaging, curbside pick-up, and virtual consultations.

1. Saunter, Laura. "The Value Shift". WGSN, Trend Forecasting, 13 May 2020, www.wgsn.com/en/products/insight/?_fsi=2aZ3uW7n

2. New Nanos Poll Reveals People in Canada Are More Stressed in the Era of COVID-19, Mental Health Commission of Canada , 6 May 2020, www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/news-article/13958/new-nanos-poll-reveals-people-canada-are-more-stressed-era-covid-19.

3. Watson, Amy. "Media Usage during COVID-19 by Country." Statista, 18 June 2020, www.statista.com/statistics/1106498/home-media-consumption-coronavirus-worldwide-by-country/.

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